ISSN 1822-8011 (print)
ISSN 1822-8038 (online)
INTELEKTINĖ EKONOMIKA
INTELLECTUAL ECONOMICS
2011, Vol. 5, No. 4(12), p. 575–589

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COHESION OF THE EU: METHODOLOGY OF INVESTIGATION

Ona Gražina RAKAUSKIENĖ

Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania
ona.rakaus@mruni.eu

Nina IVASHINENKO

University of Glasgow, United Kingdom

Abstract. The aim of this paper is to present the conceptual framework on economic and social cohesion and create the methodology to analyse and evaluate the impact of the EU enlargement on the economic and social cohesion, to prove the necessity of undertaking a new research project targeted at solving new problems in the process of European integration. However, there are many official documents and independent research. In spite of the fact that there is a set of official documents and independent investigations into economic cohesion, many questions have not yet been properly answered. This study will compile an economic analysis highlighting key problems in reference to the European enlargement, a definition of economic and social cohesion, a methodology of investigating economic and social cohesion and an information model. By analysing economic and social cohesion and its measurement as mentioned in the official EU documents and current literature, a new research agenda will be described that can be involved in any implementation of the EU cohesion policy. Future research needs to include data collected from Eurostat, the World Bank, the IMF, OECD, Eurobarometer and the outcomes of various European projects that have already addressed these issues. Additional sources could include national statistical data and its justification in an information model. This article argues that the concept of economic and social cohesion needs to be extended and that it is necessary to consider new levels of analysis and indicators of an evaluation of the integration process in the EU.

JEL classification: F59.
Keywords: conceptual framework on economic and social cohesion, architecture of cohesion policy, methodology of investigation of economic and social cohesion, information model.
Reikšminiai žodžiai: ekonominės ir socialinės sanglaudos koncepcinė struktūra, sanglaudos politikos architektūra, ekonominės ir socialinės sanglaudos tyrimo metodologija, informacinis modelis.

Introduction

The increasing international activity of the European Union and its role in the world economy mean that growing importance is attached to the processes taking place

in the economic life of a 'new Europe'. A variety of questions arise in the process. Is development heading in the right direction? Were there any mistakes involved in making the decision to expand this organisation of states? Is the enlargement of the EU economically justified? Why is it that some countries are successful and take the top places based on competitiveness rating, whereas the economies of other countries are in stagnation with a nearzero growth rate? What changes, both positive and negative, have taken place in the economies of the newcomer countries after they became members of the EU? What place do the new member states of Central and Eastern Europe have in this context, and what should be done to make the integration of these countries into the common EU market more successful, enhancing their competitiveness and economic growth rates? What perspectives could the EU expect in the future after the arrival of new Member States such as the Balkan region applicant countries?

The financial crisis and subsequent economic recession have revealed inherent structural weaknesses in many countries and regions of Europe, regardless of their level of economic and social development. Processes of convergence between Member States and regions could be slowed down over the coming years by lower growth rates, weaker public investment and fiscal retrenchment. It will be essential to find the right exit strategies from the crisis in order to better position CEEC economies in the long run to ensure that the full benefits of economic cohesion are reaped over the coming years.

1. Conceptual framework on social and economic cohesion

Social and economic cohesion is an expression of solidarity among the Member States and regions of the EU territorial level. The aim is to achieve balanced development throughout the EU, by reducing structural disparities among countries and regions, and promoting equal opportunities for all. In practical terms this is achieved by means of a financing system, principally through the European Structural Funds.

In 2003 the Commission identified 10 areas in which the new members had to improve their policies ('cohesion fund criteria'): public procurement; institutional arrangements and inter-ministerial co-ordination; financial management and control; accounting systems; recruitment of additional staff; programme negotiations; project preparation; partnership (meaning the involvement of the relevant economic and social actors in programme design) monitoring systems; sources of national co-financing.

As from 2007, the EU cohesion policy has adopted three new priorities or 'objectives':

- **Convergence** (formerly Objective 1): The goal is the support for growth and job creation in the least developed Member States and regions. Regions whose per capita GDP is less than 75% of the EU average will be eligible, but temporary support (until 2013) will also be given to regions where per capita GDP is below 75% for the EU-15 (the so-called 'statistical effect').
- **Competitiveness and employment** (formerly Objective 2): designed to help the wealthier Member States deal with economic and social change, globalisation and the transition to a knowledge society. Employment initiatives are to be based on the European Employment Strategy (EES)

- **Territorial co-operation**: to stimulate cross-border co-operation in order to find joint solutions to problems such as urban, rural and coastal development, the development of economic relations and the networking of SMEs. A new cross-border authority is set up to manage co-operation programs.

Cohesion policy has a major impact on the European economy, reducing economic differences and promoting environmental and social development. It has also played a crucial role in dealing with the economic crisis, with European Structural funds helping to cushion the impact of the crisis on the economies of the EU Member States, their citizens and businesses.

The mission of cohesion policy is defined in the Treaty without ambiguity: to promote balanced and harmonious development, in particular by reducing social and economic disparities between countries and regions. Cohesion policy is a development policy aimed at promoting long-term sustainable growth and prosperity in European states and regions through removing barriers to growth and facilitating processes of structural adjustment. Further motivation behind a development policy run at EU level lies in the existence of strong cross-border interdependencies and the need for reinforcing links between leading and lagging areas, maximizing cross-border effects and gearing investments towards EU priorities. Through its territorial approach, cohesion policy offers a unique and modern governance system that values and exploits local and regional knowledge, combines it with strategic direction and coordinates interventions between levels of government.

Cohesion policy is an essential part of the economic policy framework of the Union alongside macroeconomic and microeconomic policies. For this reason policy must be strongly linked to Single Market and key Community priorities, in particular those of the EU 2020 strategy. Cohesion policy can facilitate transition to a smarter and greener economy across Europe. By mobilising territorial potential and complementing EU policies, cohesion policy can contribute to maximise the impact of other EU priorities.

To achieve its overall development goals, cohesion policy must address three key territorial issues in maximising the benefits of European integration: the failure of less-developed regions and to fulfil their development potential, the need for continued adjustment at regional level to increase competitiveness and employment in the context of a low carbon economy, and the need to address cross-border barriers to integration.

Cohesion policy will continue to play an important role as a pillar of European integration by facilitating adjustment to improved circumstances. Its role in promoting overall harmonious development and addressing imbalances between countries and regions will be more relevant than ever in the post economic crisis period. In particular, cohesion policy can help address these challenges by:

- Supporting the development and structural adjustments of states and regions through investments by the European Regional Development Fund;
- Improving employment opportunities, facilitating industrial changes and fighting social exclusion through the European Social Fund;
- Improving connectivity and environmental sustainability through the Cohesion Fund.

Social and economic cohesion has become a major factor in European integration policy (especially following the Lisbon Agenda of 2000), but is used in a variety of often inconsistent ways. The concept of 'economic and social cohesion' points to a much wider vision of the evolution of the disparities among regions. In general, models of social and economic cohesion emerging in academic literature and EU policy documents have tended to point in following directions:

- From economic convergence to economic and social cohesion (Armstrong, Taylor and Williams, 1994; C. Socol and A. Socol, 2006)
- Competitiveness and employment (Marques,1992; Koch, 2004)
- EU enlargement and European integration (Hannequart, 1992; Barry, 2003; Vincze and Liuhto, 2005; Roosens and Laermans, 2009),
- Territorial co-operation: clustering and networking in regional policy, disparities among regions (Pachura, 2010; Faludi, 2005)
- Factors determining growth, employment and competitiveness and effectiveness of cohesion policy (Mortensen, 1994; Begg; Schelkle, Torres and Ardy, 2002; Bachtler, John and Gorzelak Grzegorz, 2007);
- Debate about measuring socio-economic cohesion (Polasek and Sellner, 2010; Taran, Ivarhnyuk, Ramos and Tanner, 2010; Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009; Van der Heijden and Kees, 2005; Cuadrado-Roura, Garrido-Yserte and Calvo, 2004)

Enlargement to 27 member states in 2007 has brought an entirely new order. The area of the EU has increased by over 25% and its population over 20%, but its wealth only increased by 5%. Average GDP per capita in the EU has fallen by more than 10% and regional disparities have doubled. Since 60% of the regions whose development is lagging behind are in the 12 Member States that joined the EU in 2004, the centre of gravity is shifting eastwards.

At national level, in a union of 27 states, the countries can be separated into three main groups. The most prosperous group is comprised of 12 current Member States – all except Greece, Spain and Portugal - where income is about average. This is followed by an intermediate group of Greece, Spain and Portugal, together with Cyprus, Malta, Slovenia and the Czech Republic, where income per head is around 80% of the EU27 average, with 13% of the total EU27 population. The third group consist of the Central and Eastern European countries (Slovakia, the Baltic States, Romania and Bulgaria), where income per head is around 40% of the EU27 average. This is a significant group accounting for around 16% of the population of the EU27.

At regional level, disparity patterns of CEEC include the following: GDP per capita in CEE regions is less than the EU average, regional unemployment is low in CEE in comparison to the EU; CEE regions are in general more sparsely populated than in the EU and agriculture dominates regional employment structures in some CEECs (Romania, Bulgaria and Poland) to a much greater extent than in the rest of the EU.

The financial and economic crisis has dramatically changed the economic landscape of the EU. In 2008, GDP growth in the EU was already very low (0.8%) and it shrank by more than 4% on average in 2009. The recession was particularly severe in the Baltic States, with negative rates declining to between 14% and 18%. Only Poland enjoyed eco-

nomic growth in 2009 (1.2%). Furthermore, the crisis has also increased regional disparities in the labour market, with unemployment at 22% in Latvia and 18.8 % in Lithuania.

The original theoretical and practical vision that gave rise to economic cohesion policy is nowadays forgotten. This vision is based on the political conviction that a strong Union needs policies that facilitate integration and policies that ensure everyone can benefit from it. This vision is still valid today. In order to provide a new dynamics for integration, the EU needs a strong development policy which enables all EU citizens, independent of where they live, to reap the benefits and mitigate the negative side-effects created by the unification of markets.

2. Going beyond the state of the art

As the processes of globalisation and global economic development intensify, the 21st century brings a myriad of new challenges for the European Union. Globalisation has led to complex and pressing problems, not only in the weaker Central and Eastern European countries, but also in the Western countries that lead the EU economy. Yet over the recent years the EU has increasingly lagged behind other global economies; the buoyancy of its development and innovation is in decline. To what extent, if any, has this decline been mitigated by the EU policies, or perhaps contributed to by them? All of this threatens the EU's historically strong position of international competitiveness. The EU, which unites almost all Western, Central and, to an increasing extent, Eastern European countries, is undergoing a transformation, while at the same time expanding, deepening and qualitatively developing its integrated structure. This process carries both new threats and tremendous opportunities for development. Whether the new situation will be favourable for the sustainable and effective development of the EU economy depends on the implementation of the EU's economic welfare model and the response to the new challenges of the cohesion policy that will be persuaded in the future.

Long term challenges - competition from new emerging global economic powerhouses, climate change, diversifying supply channels, developing new energy sources, increasing energy efficiency and its implications for public finance, the growth of unemployment, and the risk of poverty and social exclusion - all generate pressure for structural change across Europe. Inevitably, some EU countries are likely to benefit, while others face the risk of losing out. This may exacerbate the problems of some existing economies in the Union and result in new patterns of winners and losers.

However, the new economic context outlined above also presents a window of opportunity to implement structural reforms, re-assess comparative and competitive advantages, identify new sources of growth and design development strategies with accompanying policy instruments. In this respect, Member States and regions are essential actors for providing structural responses to these challenges within the changing economic environment.

As underlined in the 'Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion: the Future of Cohesion Policy' of the European Commission (Brussels, 2010), cohesion policy aims to promote harmonious development of the Union and its regions by reduc-

ing regional disparities. It also underpins the growth model of the Europe 2020 strategy including the need to respond to societal and employment challenges all Member States and regions face. The policy supports such development with a clear investment strategy in every region by increasing competitiveness, expanding employment, improving social inclusion and protecting and enhancing the environment. The multilevel governance system for the policy helps to make the EU more visible to its citizens.

All regions and Member States would be eligible for cohesion policy and able to tailor their strategy in an integrated manner to their specific strengths and weaknesses.

As today, support would be differentiated between regions based on their level of economic development (measured by GDP per capita), drawing a clear distinction between 'less' and 'more' developed regions. To soften the transition between these two categories and ensure a fairer treatment for regions with similar level of economic development, the question could be asked as to whether a simpler system with a new intermediate category of regions could replace the current phasing-out and phasing-in system. This category would also include regions currently eligible under the 'convergence' objective but whose GDP would be higher than 75% of the Union average according to the latest statistics.

At the same time, and consistently with the EU Budget Review, there is a need to consider for the future architecture of cohesion policy, how the ESF could be refocused on securing the 2020 targets and objectives and how to achieve greater visibility and predictable funding volumes. It is also important to examine how the Fund could better serve the European employment strategy and contribute to the comprehensive European employment initiative called for by the EU Budget Review.

The policy will continue to focus on implementing the Integrated Guidelines for economic and employment policies.

The Cohesion Fund would continue to benefit Member States whose GNI per capita is lower than 90% of the Union average. Finally, cohesion policy would continue to foster territorial dimensions of cooperation (crossborder, transnational and inter-regional). This would include a review and simplification of the current arrangements for crossborder cooperation, including IPA, ENPI and EDF crossborder cooperation at the EU's external borders, and also of current practices in transnational action supported both by the ERDF and the ESF. How can it be ensured that the architecture of cohesion policy takes into account the specificity of each Fund and in particular the need to provide greater visibility and predictable funding volumes for the ESF and to focus it on securing the 2020 objectives? How could a new intermediate category of regions be designed to accompany regions which have not completed their process of catching up?

3. Methodology of investigation

The primary objectives. The aim of planning project is to present a concept and focus on social and economic cohesion, create a methodology to analyse the impact of the EU enlargement on the socio-economic cohesion and evaluate this impact.

The primary objectives are:

- To present a concept and focus on social and economic cohesion;

- To analyse the social and economic cohesion trends of the EU between 1989 and 2011;
- To evaluate the economic policies in each of the Member States and candidate countries;
- To evaluate the effects of EU policies in each of the countries;
- To forecast the strategic perspectives of social and economic cohesion for the future of the EU, CEEC and specific regions in the context of the strategy 'Europe 2020'.

The general approach to social and economic cohesion is based on the background of existing studies of the cohesion trends of Western and Central and Eastern European countries in a period between 1989 and 2011, evaluating the positive and negative results of the European enlargement and how this enlargement impacted the social and economic cohesion of Member States.

Social and economic cohesion policy must ensure faster convergence through economic and social integration and greater connectivity in the Single Market. To achieve this, the policy should continue to focus on addressing market failures and ensure that countries and regions make full use of their development potential in the context of European economic integration. In this respect, while the objectives set by socio-economic cohesion policy are the right ones, they need to be clarified in the context of challenges the EU is facing in the 21st century:

- To enhance competitiveness and employment at the national and regional level (the countries and regions need to adjust to global challenges which often results in losses of competitiveness, employment and social cohesion);
- To facilitate growth in the lagging areas of the Union (underachieving countries and regions have to achieve their full potential and fully benefit from the Single Market; they need additional EU support to create the conditions for growth, strengthen their industrial base, unlock the full potential of SMEs and close the infrastructure gap in transport, environment, energy, human capital, education and research);
- To foster integration across borders (in the context of the Single Market, border regions still offer high unexploited potential, which depends on territorial cooperation).

The study has to be conducted at three levels:

- At the EU level – the Economic and Monetary Union, EU fiscal policy, the Single Market, trade, competition, energy, transport, environment, employment, social policy, gender equality,
- At the level of EU regions – disparities between EU regions, EU Structural Funds; Financial Frameworks from 1988 – 1992 to 2007 – 2013;
- At the level of EU Member States – the disparities between countries on macroeconomic and microeconomic levels.

Our approach to social and economic cohesion has been based on **the holistic paradigm** versus methodological individualism. First of all, that means that economic cohesion must be described not only in economic terms, but together in a close relationship with social policy and environmental policy. On the one hand, European cohesion policy, with its strong focus on social, economic and environmental develop-

ment, is indeed the clearest expression of European commitment to solidarity, which should remain at the heart of European integration. On the other hand, this remains especially important for Central and Eastern European countries.

A wide range of research was carried out from the start of the integration process of European countries and many aspects of cooperation were investigated. However, as a wide literature review shows, the researchers preferred to focus their attention on one problem that was investigated using indepth one type of research methods.

4. Information model

Design of information model. The complexity of the integration process, which is influenced by a lot of factors such as the enlargement of the EU, differences of entrance level of newcomers in the EU, recent financial crises and etc., needs to be reflected in building a new information model for the investigation of social and economic cohesion. The model could be created using the following methods:

- secondary analysis of economic and statistical data sources;
- content-analysis of main economic programmes and strategies;
- interviews with experts about social and economic cohesion measuring and its link to the real economic situation on three levels.

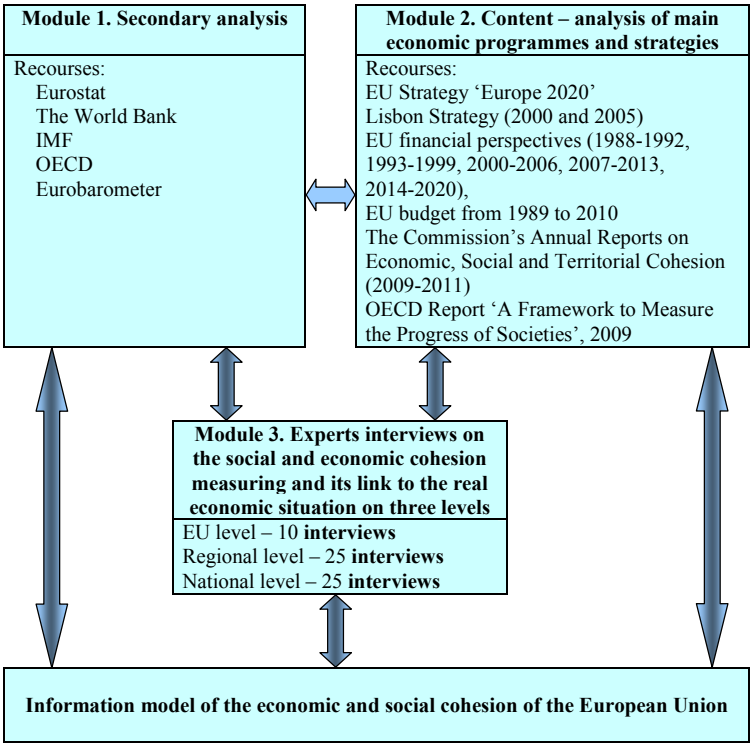


Fig.1. Design of information model

Module 1. Secondary analysis. In general, secondary analysis is based on existing data collected for the purposes of a prior study in order to pursue a research interest what is distinct from that of the original work (Hinds, Vogel and Clarke-Steffen 1997, Szabo and Strang 1997). It is often difficult to distinguish clearly between secondary analysis, systematic reviews and meta-analyses of qualitative studies. However, the main feature of secondary analysis is the exchange of the study purposes. The aim of meta-analyses is instead to compile and assess the evidence relating to a common concern or area of practice (Popay, Rogers and Williams 1998). Secondary analysis uses single or multiple qualitative data sets, as well as mixed qualitative and quantitative data sets. This method of qualitative data analysis is not widely used due to several reasons such as difficulties in integrating and obtaining a data matrix that was collected for various purposes.

For socioeconomic cohesion harmonised statistical data sources available from Eurostat, The World Bank, IMF, OECD, Eurobarometer and the outcomes of various European projects that have already addressed these issues can be drawn upon. Additional sources could include national statistical data and their justification in an information model. Links between EU level of statistic data and national level of statistic recourses tend to be a problem in both research and practice.

Implementation of secondary analysis can give an extential opportunity for modelling a threedimensional data matrix covering the period from 1992 to 2011.

The main principles of the creation of indicators are as follows:

- To take into account goals and targets set up in the rest of the research modules, i.e. political, economic and social cohesion.
- To reflect the three levels of the process: at the EU level, at regional level within the EU and at national level.
- To cover the period from 1989 to 2011.
- To ensure data correlation as well as its aggregation from the national to the EU level.
- To be comparable with Maastricht criteria.
- To be comparable with the indicators used in the EU regulatory levelling processes and programmes.
- To be based on the existing models such as Polasek and Sellner (2008), Taran, P., Ivakhnyuk, I., Ramos, M., Tanner, A. (2009), Van der Heijden, Kees (2005), Cuadrado-Roura, J.R., Garrido-Yserte, R., Calvo M.A.M. (2004).
- To ensure the possibility of using factor and cluster analysis and building prognosis models.

According to the information model of Stiglitz – Sen – Fitoussi (2009), indicators can be classified into ten themes including socio-economic development, sustainable consumption and production, social inclusion, demographic changes, public health, sustainable development, sustainable transport, natural resources, global partnership and good governance. The main idea of this model is investigation of socio-economic cohesion as uniform process in all its complexity and variety.

The importance of statistical indicators in designing and assessing policies is increasing because information has become a significant resource not only for political

decision-making but for each household too. Well-developed society needs an adequate information model for assessing and influencing the functioning of economic markets. The main characteristic of 'an information society; is wide access to data, including statistical data, for its population. This access is based on the widespread use of information technology and growth of education level in the population. However, methodology of measuring can affect statistical result and decisions. Now it is not only one simple decision between promoting GDP and protecting the environment.

Secondary analysis can reveal the advantages and disadvantages of the standard measures using official statistical organisation and new methodology offered by scientists from various international institutions. Members of the European Union which analysed 'cohesion' are generally identified with the idea of convergence in income or GDP per capita. However, the majority of analyses of regional disparities in Europe that are based on the concept of convergence take as an indicator the evolution of this variable and, sometimes, that of productivity and employment, but not other variables that are indicative of a country's development. For example, the disparity that exists between the correlation of GPD per capita and some socio-economic variables illustrate how the use of GDP per capita as a summary indicator of all the economic and social aspects of a region does not offer a good snapshot (Cuadrado-Roura, Garrido-Yserte, Calvo; 2004). Using secondary analysis gives opportunities to avoid mistakes and discrepancies in the creation of an information model.

Module 2. Content – analysis of main economic programmes and strategies. The method of content-analysis has a long history and probably needs no introduction. However, this research technique that once existed as a simple method is carried out in various different projects today. For investigating economic cohesion content-analysis can be identified as 'a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts and to the contexts from their use' (Krippendorff; 2004).

Content-analysis of main economic programmes and strategies of the European Union and its Member States will be able to show the change of the two parallel processes: construction of this term and real regulation process of economic development in the EU. The main information resources for content-analysis could be the EU Strategy 'Europe 2020', Lisbon Strategy (2000 and 2005), EU financial perspectives (1988-1992, 1993-1999, 2000-2006, 2007-2013, 2014 - 2020), EU budget from 1989 to 2010, the Commission's Annual Reports on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion (2009 – 2011).; OECD Report 'A Framework to Measure the Progress of Societies', 2009; Communications of the Commission and etc.

The principal difference between traditional legislation analysis and content-analysis targeting investigation of socio-economic cohesion is considering the wider socio-economic context affected by the implementation of new regulation rules. Another significant part of our analysis must be to reveal the key points of changing vision and their interference between EU and national levels. In order to achieve this target, content-analysis could be used for comparing the main thesaurus used for EU documents and the one used for national strategies. This seems highly relevant for understanding not only the general trends and patterns but the more detailed impact on particular

countries, the choices and policies they have introduced and their various trajectories of change.

Traditional analysis of economic cohesion is usually based on quantitative data using a vast array of statistical techniques. However, in a situation where an in-depth understanding of the way that local socio-economic growth correlates with socio-economic cohesion on the European level is needed, qualitative methods allow the gap between traditional measuring of economic phenomena and real development processes to be filled.

Today, expert interviews are considered a standard method of qualitative approach in diverse fields of the political and social sciences such as international relations, organisational research, gender studies etc. However, they are still marginalised in international discussions about the methodology and methods of socio-economic research. Nevertheless, in projects relating to economic cohesion expert interviews could be evaluated from perspectives such as finding similarities in experts' points of view and particularities that characterise the local economies of selected countries.

Module 3. Expert interviews on the social and economic cohesion measuring and its link to the real economic situation on three levels. Expert interviews on measuring social and economic cohesion and its link to the real economic situation on three levels could be an effective technique. In order to understand social and economic cohesion on national level a series of interviews with 10 experts in the selected countries will be carried out. On the regional level it will be necessary to contact 25 experts and on the EU level additional 25 people will be involved in discussions.

The order that information will be collected and whether national experts or European experts will be first poses an interesting question. Either choice has its own advantages and disadvantages. If interviewing starts at the national level, the information obtained will be more focused on the differences and disparities that now act as barriers to socio-economic cohesion. In contrast, information from experts on the European level could be more focused on the universal development processes. In reference to the primary objectives of this research, starting from the EU level seems more beneficial for investigating the correlation between different levels of the information model.

During interviews with experts of the EU knowledge will be gained not only about the integration process and relationships between countries but also about the kind of indicators to be obtained from national statistics in order to create three-dimensional models. Guidance for interviewing national experts will be rewritten taking into consideration the results of the first stage of expert analysis with the EU level experts. Interviews with experts at regional cooperation of the EU Member States is the third stage of field work at this research project The regional cohesion process shows as a model of the problems in EU enlargement. Nevertheless, integration processes between EU countries included in the same region have a longer history of cooperation. These socio-economic relationships are embedded more deeply than in the EU and grounded on social norms and traditions.

Guidance for all three levels of interviews will contain a general section and specific questions. For finding experts and building contacts, a method called 'snowballing'

is suggested. In socio-economic research, snowball sampling is a technique for developing a research sample whereby existing study subjects recommend future subjects from among their acquaintances. This sampling technique is often used in investigating elite groups that are difficult for researchers to access. Taking into consideration the academic debate about the relevance of this method, snowball samples are usually used together with quotations and selection experts on status grid.

Qualitative analysis will be used before creating the information model and after statistical analysis as the final stage of a research project into socio-economic cohesion as a whole.

The final series of interviews with selected experts will be targeted on estimation and verification of forecasts of the integration process in Europe. The main criteria for distinguishing between experts who will be involved in the first series of interviews will be their degree of understanding of European development tendency and capability to investigate it. An adequate variation of expert knowledge can be established after carrying out 15 interviews.

Conclusions

1. Europe faces a daunting task. It must exit from a deep crisis and reduce unemployment and poverty, while switching to a low-carbon economy. Such an ambitious task requires swift action on many fronts, which is why the European Council adopted the Europe 2020 Strategy. For Europe to succeed, European, national, regional and local levels all need to play their part. Cohesion policy should continue to play a critical role in these difficult times, in order to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, while promoting harmonious development of the Union and its regions by reducing regional disparities.

2. Cohesion policy has made a significant contribution to spreading growth and prosperity across the Union, while reducing economic, social and territorial disparities. The fifth report on economic, social and territorial cohesion shows that the policy has created new jobs, increased human capital, built critical infrastructure and improved environmental protection, especially in the less developed regions. Undoubtedly, without cohesion policy, disparities would be greater. Yet the lasting social effects of the crisis, the demand for innovation arising from increased global challenges and the imperative to make the most of every euro of public expenditure call for an ambitious reform of the policy.

3. As indicated in the EU budget review, in particular progress needs to be made in the following key areas: concentrating resources on the Europe 2020 objectives and targets; committing Member States to implementing the reforms needed for the policy to be effective; and improving the effectiveness of the policy with an increased focus on results. The explicit linkage of cohesion policy and Europe 2020 provides a real opportunity: to continue helping the poorer regions of the EU to catch up, to facilitate coordination between EU policies, and to develop cohesion policy into a leading

enabler of growth, also in qualitative terms, for the whole of the EU, while addressing societal challenges such as ageing and climate change. The following sections look, in turn, at how the policy can be made more effective and its impact improved so as to enhance the European added value, at how governance of the policy can be further strengthened, at how the delivery system can be streamlined and made simpler and at the architecture of the policy.

4. At every new stage, the process of integration in Europe has become more complex than before. The management of a new type of socio-economic system needs new methodology and techniques. The literature review shows that there is plenty of debate in this sphere, supported by various European commissions, universities and independent research centres. Participation in this discussion is especially important for the new Member States of the European Union, which need to increase their productivity and reduce disparities with the older members. Nevertheless, the process of integration at the new stage of the EU enlargement should be a balance between cohesion and preserving countries' unique cultural traditions and market positions.

5. The indicators that are traditionally used for evaluating the integration process need to be revised by taking into consideration the national particularities of the new countries. This article attempts to highlight how current problems and lack of knowledge influence socio-economic cohesion and to describe a new potential research project. The methodology of investigating social and economic cohesion outlined above can be used to carry out a full research project.

References

1. Armstrong, H.W., Taylor, J. and Williams, A. (1994). European Community Regional Policy. In: Artis, M. and Lee, N. (eds.) *The Economics of the European Union*, Oxford University Press, Oxford. 172-201
2. Bachtler, J., Gorzelak, G. (2007) Reforming EU Cohesion Policy, *Policy Studies* Vol: 28 Issue: 4 pp 309-326
3. Barry, F (2003); Economic Integration and Convergence Processes in the EU Cohesion Countries *Journal of Common Market Studies* Volume: 41 pp. 897-921
4. Begg, I., Schelkle, W., Torres, F., Ardy, B. (2002) How will EMU affect cohesion? *Intereconomics* Vol: 37 Issue: 6, pp. 300-314
5. Cuadrado-Roura, J.R., Garrido-Yserte, R., Calvo, M.A.M (2004) Economic and Social Cohesion in the EU: a critical approach, 44th European congress of the regional science association, University of Porto – Porto, Portugal – 25-29 August 2004
6. Faludi, A. (2005) Cohesion, coherence, co-operation: European spatial planning coming of age? / Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; NewYork : Routledge, 2010 xvi, 207 p.
7. Hannequart, A. (1992) Economic and social cohesion in Europe: a new objective for integration / edited by Achille Hannequart Routledge, xii, 236 p.
8. Hinds, P.S., Vogel, R.J., Clarke-Steffen, L. (1997) 'The possibilities and pitfalls of doing a secondary analysis of a qualitative data set', *Qualitative Health Research*, vol. 7(3): 408-24
9. Koch, K. (2004) Future of Work in Europe: Market and Economic and Social Cohesion *Industrielle Beziehungen* Vol: 11 Issue: 4 395

10. Marques, A. 1992; Community competition policy and economic and social cohesion *Regional studies* Vol: 26 Issue: 4 ISSN: 0034-3404 Date: 1992 Pages: 404 - 407 Mortensen, 1994; Improving Economic and Social Cohesion in the European Community
11. Publius Vol: 24 Issue: 4 start page: 137
12. Pachura, P. (2010) Regional cohesion [electronic resource]: effectiveness of network structures / Heidelberg : Physica-Verlag
13. Polasek, W., and Sellner R. (2008). Spatial Chow-Lin methods: Bayesian and ML forecast comparisons. Working Paper 38–08, the Rimini Centre for Economic Analysis Rimini, Italy.
14. Popay, J., Rogers, A., Williams, G. (1998) 'Rationale and standards for the systematic review of qualitative literature in health services research', *Qualitative Health Research*, vol. 8 (3): 329-40
15. Roosens, P., Laermans, H. (2009), The Enlargement Of The European Union *Ekonomska Misao i Praksa* Vol: 18 Issue: 2: 397
16. Socol, C., Socol, A.,(2006) Adopting the Euro: Costs or Benefits? Theoretical and Applied Economics Vol: 1(506) Issue: 1(506), pp. 51-60
17. Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009; Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress
18. Szabo, V. and Strang, V.R. (1997) 'Secondary analysis of qualitative data', *Advances in Nursing Science*, vol. 20(2): 66-74
19. Taran, Ivarhnyuk, Ramos and Tanner (2009) Economic migration, social cohesion and development : towards an integrated approach / Patrick Taran ; with Irina Ivakhnyuk [*et al.*]; under the responsibility and in co-operation with the Editing Group of the European Committee on Migration Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing
20. Van der Heijden, K. (2005) Scenarios : the art of strategic conversation Chichester; Hoboken, N.J. : John Wiley & Sons, 2nd ed.
21. Vincze, Z., Liuhto, K. (2005) The Enlargement of the European Union *Journal of East-West Business* Vol: 11: pp: 9-12.
22. The Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion: the Future of Cohesion Policy. European Commission, Brussels, 9.11.2010. COM (2010) 642 final.
23. 'Europe 2020: A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth', COM(200), 2020, 3.2010.
24. 'The EU Budget Review', COM(2010) 700, 19.10.2010.

EUROPOS SĄJUNGOS EKONOMINĖ IR SOCIALINĖ SANGLAUDA: TYRIMŲ METODOLOGIJA

Ona Gražina RAKAUSKIENĖ, Nina IVASHINENKO

Santrauka. Atsižvelgiant į vykstančius naujus ES plėtros ir integracijos procesus, kylančias problemas įveikiant pasaulio krizę, straipsnyje nagrinėjama ES ekonominės ir socialinės sanglaudos koncepcija ir ES sanglaudos politikos įtaka ES plėtrai, pateikiama šių procesų analizės ir įvertinimo metodologija.

Sprendžiant naujas problemas ES sanglaudos srityje, ES institucijos pateikia daugybę naujų dokumentų, kurių nuostatas reikia įgyvendinti, atliekami atskiri nepriklausomi moksliniai

tyrimai, tačiau kyla daugybė klausimų, į kuriuos dar nėra atsakyta. Šiame straipsnyje kaip tik ir stengiamasi pateikti kompleksinį ES ekonominės, socialinės bei teritorinės sanglaudos problemų suvokimą, sujungti Eurostato, Pasaulio banko, Tarptautinio valiutos fondo, Europos bendradarbiavimo ir plėtros organizacijos, Eurobarometro statistinius kiekybinių ir kokybinių tyrimų duomenis, pateikiant informacinį ES ekonominės ir socialinės sanglaudos tyrimų modelį, kuris galėtų būti panaudotas efektyviau įgyvendinant ES sanglaudos politiką.

Ona Gražina Rakauskienė – Habil. Dr. in Economics; professor of Department of International Trade and Customs, Faculty of Economics and Finance Management, Mykolas Romeris University. Scientific research area – economics of the European Union; international economics; quality of life of population; gender economics.

Ona Gražina Rakauskienė – Mykolo Romerio universiteto Ekonomikos ir finansų valdymo fakulteto Tarptautinės prekybos ir muitų katedros profesorė, ekonomikos mokslų hab. dr. Mokslo tyrimų sritys – Europos Sąjungos ekonomika, tarptautinė ekonomika, gyventojų gyvenimo kokybė, lyčių ekonomika.

Nina Ivashinenko – Habil. Dr. Professor of economics, Honorary Research Fellow of Glasgow University, United Kingdom; Head of Department of Economics of Gorkij University, Russia; scientific research area – economics of the European Union; economics of Russia; social economics.

Nina Ivashinenko – Glazgo universiteto vyriausioji mokslinė bendradarbė; Gorkio (Rusija) universiteto profesorė, hab. dr., ekonomikos katedros vedėja; mokslo tyrimų sritys – Europos Sąjungos ir Rusijos ekonomika, socialinė ekonomika.